

Site Update



Ringwood Mines/Landfill Superfund Site
Ringwood, Bergen County, New Jersey

May 2004

Previous Actions

CURRENT STATUS AND NEXT STEPS

During the 1960's and 1970's, paint sludge and other waste generated at Ford Motor Company's (Ford's) Mahwah Plant was disposed of at the Ringwood Mines/Landfill Superfund Site (Site). The local community recently alerted the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the presence of additional surficial paint sludge at the Site, despite the performance of four cleanup actions to remove paint sludge from the Site during the 1980's and 1990's.

In response to this new information, EPA plans to conduct a survey of the Site to attempt to locate remaining pockets of paint sludge. **This survey will include residential properties located at the Site to which access has been granted by the respective property owners.** Subsequent to this survey, the extent of the observed paint sludge will be further defined in order to allow for its removal.

In addition, a comprehensive groundwater and surface water sampling event will be conducted to verify earlier data which showed that the Site is not contaminating these resources or threatening the nearby Wanaque Reservoir.

SITE BACKGROUND

The 500-acre Site is the location of abandoned magnetite mines which were operated from the 1700's through the 1940's. During the late 1960's and early 1970's, the Site was used for the disposal of wastes, including waste generated by Ford.

In July 1982, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection conducted a Site Inspection which revealed the presence of volatile organic compounds and heavy metals in Site groundwater and surface water. The Site was added to the National Priorities List in 1983, indicating that the Site merited EPA's immediate attention.

From March 1984 through April 1988, Ford, under EPA oversight, performed a four-phase Remedial Investigation (RI) at the Site to define the nature and extent of contamination. The results of this investigation prompted EPA to issue an Administrative Order to Ford to excavate paint sludge and dispose of it off site. From 1987 through 1988, Ford removed approximately 7000 cubic yards of paint sludge and associated soil from four areas of the Site.

Although significant studies were conducted to identify areas of paint sludge at the Site, soil erosion and earthwork activities have, on several occasions, uncovered remnant pockets of paint sludge. In 1990, 54 drums of waste discovered at the Site were removed and disposed of off site. In 1995, an additional 5 cubic yards of surficial paint sludge and soil was removed from the Site. In December 1997 and January 1998, an additional 30 cubic yards of paint sludge and associated soil discovered at the Site was excavated and disposed of off site.

Questions or concerns regarding the Ringwood Mines/Landfill Superfund Site? **Please call EPA toll free at 1-877-494-1308.**

Joseph Gowers
Remedial Project Manager
(212) 637-4413 or e-mail at:
Gowers.Joe@epa.gov

Patricia Seppi
Community Involvement Coordinator
(212) 637-3679 or e-mail at:
Seppi.Pat@epa.gov

On September 29, 1988, EPA issued a Record of Decision (ROD) which selected a remedy for the Site. The ROD called for the implementation of a long-term groundwater and surface water monitoring program. From 1990 through 1995, a five-year groundwater monitoring program was conducted at

the Site. The results of this monitoring program indicated that contaminant levels had been reduced since waste materials had been removed from the Site, and that contaminants were only detected sporadically. Surface water sampling was discontinued in 1990, because sampling results indicated that contaminants had not been detected above New Jersey Surface Water Quality Criteria and calculated health based levels during the six years that the surface water was monitored.

In 1998, EPA directed Ford to conduct two additional rounds of groundwater sampling in wells where elevated levels of lead and arsenic had been detected during previous sampling. The results of this groundwater sampling in August 1999 indicated the presence of elevated levels of arsenic in one well. In order to monitor this situation and confirm decreasing contaminant levels, four monitoring wells and three surface water locations were sampled in April 2000. The results of this sampling event indicated that lead and arsenic in the groundwater were below health based standards, except for one slightly elevated level of arsenic in the same monitoring well where arsenic had been detected in the earlier sampling.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

I live at the Site. Is my water safe to drink?

Yes. Residents at the Site currently receive their drinking water from the municipal water supply, which is regularly sampled to ensure that it meets health-based standards. Furthermore, the municipal water supply does not draw water from the Site.

I have paint sludge on my property. What should I do?

Please contact EPA to report this situation. When leaving a message, please leave your name and phone number so that an EPA representative can get back to you. EPA will arrange for inspection of your property and disposal of the material, as appropriate. **Please do not attempt to clean up and dispose of the material, or handle the material.**

I have noticed paint sludge at the Site, or have information regarding past disposal practices at the Site. What should I do?

Please report this information to EPA. When leaving a message, please leave your name and phone number so that an EPA representative can get back to you.

Once again, please do not attempt to clean up and dispose of the material, or handle the material.

I live at the Site and believe that paint sludge is located on my property. How do I arrange to have EPA inspect my property?

Please contact EPA to report your situation. When leaving a message, please leave your name and phone number so that an EPA representative can get back to you.

Has the Wanaque Reservoir been contaminated by the Site?

No. Water from the Wanaque Reservoir is monitored on a regular basis to ensure that it meets health-based standards. Furthermore, the latest groundwater and surface water sampling conducted at the Site shows no evidence that the Site is contaminating these waters which may discharge to the Wanaque Reservoir.

Our Goal is to Keep You Informed

Public participation is essential to the success of the Superfund program and EPA. Through public meetings, availability sessions, mailings and information repositories, we are always available to address your questions regarding the Ringwood Mines/Landfill Superfund Site.

Other Ways to Get Information

Review documents about the Ringwood Mines/Landfill Site in the EPA's information repository at the following location:

Ringwood Library
30 Cannici Drive
Ringwood, New Jersey 07456

On line all the time? Visit www.epa.gov/superfund for info on Superfund and your community's cleanup.

SUPERFUND OMBUDSMAN

EPA, Region 2 has designated an ombudsman for you to call and express your concerns or complaints about the Superfund program. Call **1-888-283-7626**.